

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA A. FORD

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Patricia A. Ford, the 1998 recipient "Unionist of the Year" award bestowed by the Central Labor Council of Alameda County on May 8, 1998 in Oakland, CA. Raised and educated in Oakland, California, Patricia A. Ford began her career as a labor activist in the early 1970's when he helped to form an employee caucus at Alameda County's Highland Hospital. The group sought to reform its independent union, the Alameda County Employees Association, and Ford helped lead a successful effort to affiliate the union with SEI as Local 616.

Ford became one of the new local's first and most effective shop stewards, and Local 616 members quickly tapped her for leadership. In 1975, she was the first African-American woman elected Vice President of the Executive Board, and in 1978, the first African-American woman elected Local 616 President. Meanwhile, Ford made the union her career as she became the first rank-and-file member selected to work as a field representative. In 1989, the Local 616 Executive Board appointed Ford to the union's top position, Executive Director and a member of the Executive Committee of the Central Labor Council of Alameda County. She was the first African-American to serve in that capacity.

Under Ford's leadership, Local 616 made tremendous strides, successfully extending its organizing into the private sector, where it now represents employees of Prison Health Services and the AIDS Project of the East Bay. Ford also developed and hosted the first SEIU-sponsored Civil and Human Rights Conference, attended by leaders and members from throughout the SEIU western region. Since then, the International Union has expanded the Civil and Human Rights Conference to all regions.

In 1992, Ford was elected to the SEIU International Executive Board, and became President of SEIU Joint Council 2 in the Bay Area. In 1995, Ford was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Western Conference, a position she still holds. In April 1996, Ford made SEIU history when she was elected as the International Executive Vice President on a leadership slate headed by International President Andrew L. Stern. She, thus, became the first African-American, and only the second woman, elected to a top leadership post at SEIU.

Ford was a member of the Board of Directors of the Alameda Alliance for Health which manages the MediCal program for Alameda County and is a parishioner of the Williams Chapel Baptist Church in Oakland, California. She has a son, Andre, and two grandchildren, Ayauna Phajae and Christopher Erin.

Her life-long commitment to service for all working people has been a model for all of us. With heartfelt congratulations, I salute Patricia A. Ford as the Central Labor Council of Alameda County's 1998 "Unionist of the Year."

COMMEMORATING ALBANY,
OREGON'S SESQUICENTENNIAL**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, May 17, 1998 marks the Sesquicentennial of the date that Walter and Thomas Montieth filed a land claim in what became known as Albany, Oregon.

Found in the heart of the Willamette Valley along the banks of the Willamette and Calapooia rivers, Albany, is renowned for its beautiful victorian homes, gracious downtown district, and diverse economy. Albany has flourished as a center of business activity for the region while preserving its roots as a pioneer settlement. Oregonians should take great pride in the foresight of Albany's community leaders who preserved its historic architecture and in those who make it available to all of us to enjoy today.

I'm proud to have the honor to represent the people of the Albany area in the United States Congress. I congratulate the City and its leaders on its 150th birthday.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "POISON
CONTROL CENTER ENHANCE-
MENT AND AWARENESS ACT OF
1998"**HON. FRED UPTON**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation that I am introducing with my colleague and friend Rep. Ed Towns to provide a stable source of funding for our nation's poison control centers, create a national toll-free number to provide ready access to these centers, and increase public education about poison prevention and the availability of poison control resources.

Poison control centers provide vital, very cost-effective services to the American public. Each year, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings occur in the home, and over 50 percent of poisoning victims are children under the age of 6. For every dollar spent on poison control center services, seven dollars in medical costs are saved.

In spite of their obvious value, poison control centers are in jeopardy. They are currently financed through unstable arrangements of various public and private sources. Over the last two decades, the number of centers has steadily declined, jeopardizing access to services.

The legislation I am introducing today will provide up to \$27.6 million per year over the next five years to provide a stable source of funding for these centers, establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and improve public education on poisoning prevention and services. The legislation is designed to ensure that these funds supplement—not supplant—other funding that the centers may be receiving and provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the authority to impose a matching requirement.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of this very cost-effective investment in the safety and health of the American public, especially our children.

INTRODUCING H.R. 3845 TO CREATE
A JOINT FORCES COMMAND**HON. WILLIAM M. "MAC" THORNBERRY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I believe that one of the most important, and in many ways most difficult, challenges facing our government and our Nation over the next few years is the transformation of our national security organizations to meet our security needs of the next century. Toward that end, I have introduced H.R. 3845, to create a Joint Forces Command in the U.S. military.

Inside and outside of government, there is widespread recognition that the world security environment has changed and that our security structures will have to change as well. Throughout history, nations that have prepared to fight the last war have paid the price. Nations that recognize changing conditions, develop new technologies and doctrines, and exert the institutional discipline to overcome the natural resistance to change have had the advantage.

The threats to our security are changing—which is not to say they are lessening. There is less risk of a nuclear war with Russia, but there continue to be many nations seeking nuclear weapons. The chemical and biological threat is growing. Conflicts in all parts of the world are more troubling as they are brought into our living rooms and as the world becomes more interdependent.

Meanwhile, technology is advancing at a dizzying pace, creating both new dangers and opportunities. Worldwide commerce is becoming dependent upon space, just as it was dependent on the oceans in the past. But limited budgets and uncertainty as to our role in the world, added to the institutional resistance to change, place doubt on our ability to adapt to meet future challenges.

One thing is certain: Change is happening all around us, and it will continue to happen. We will have to be prepared to deal with it; the only question is whether we will be prepared in time.

We must rethink all of our security structures, not just the military. Our diplomatic, nuclear energy, and international economic efforts must all be part of a new approach. But I fear that bureaucratic self-interests, fighting for scarce resources, focusing on day to day problems, and the lack of urgency will conspire to prevent the kind of timely transformation which is required.

This kind of transformation in the military requires changes in process, culture, organization, doctrine, as well as taking advantage of technology. The role for Congress in this transformation is obviously limited. But just as in the past with Goldwater-Nichols, the Congress's role is indispensable. H.R. 3845 would take one small, but significant step toward making sure we make the transformation which is required of us.

Since 1991, the Atlantic Command has responsibility for training, force integration and